

CONNECTICUT ALLIANCE TO END SEXUAL VIOLENCE



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EndSexualViolenceCT.org formerly CONNSACS

Appropriations Committee Public Hearing Regarding the Governor's Proposed FY 2018-2019 Budget Thursday, February 23, 2017

Good afternoon Senator Osten, Senator Formica, Representative Walker, and members of the committee. Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual violence is a statewide alliance of individual sexual assault crisis programs. The Alliance is dedicated to prevention education, public policy advocacy, and providing essential quality, comprehensive, and culturally competent sexual assault victim services at each of our nine community-based sexual assault crisis centers.

In support of our sister coalition, The Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence, we ask that you protect funding for critical domestic violence services under the Department of Social Services' (DSS) budget. This funding is necessary in order for CCADV's 18 domestic violence service agencies to respond to the ongoing needs of domestic violence victims and their families.

According to the CCADV, nearly 40,000 victims of domestic violence sought services at one of their 18 service centers during the 2016 fiscal year. In addition to immediate safety planning services, counselling and court advocacy, 1 in 17 domestic violence victims required an emergency shelter to ensure safety from an abuser. 69% of children requiring this life-saving emergency shelter are under the age of 7. Many victims of domestic violence suffer from sleep disturbances, anxiety, and depression, and the rate of children who are abused or neglected rises 30-60% for children who live in houses where domestic violence is present. Many victims of sexual violence, nearly 1 in 10 women in the US (9.4%) according to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), are assaulted by an intimate partner

The work of the CCADV is essential to the continued support of domestic violence victims. An increase and shelter utilization and required shelter stay has posed additional stress on domestic violence services, as alternative housing solutions can be even more costly and unsafe. The governor's budget recognizes the continued need for quality domestic violence resources provided by the CCADV for victims and families and we ask that you work to uphold your commitment to this state's residents by keeping the funding for domestic violence shelter line item in the governor's budget.

Thank you time and consideration.

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